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## THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN BAY WARNS OF THE RISK OF WILDFIRE SMOKE



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**Panama City, Fla.**— Smoky conditions are occurring in parts of Bay County from current wildfires. The Florida Department of Health in Bay County cautions citizens that wildfire smoke is a respiratory irritant that can cause scratchy throat, coughing, headaches or irritated eyes and nose. Smoke can worsen asthma, and other chronic lung or heart conditions. Dust generated from increased wildfire response activity on dirt roads may also worsen these conditions.

### Protect your family from smoke:

- Pay attention to news coverage or health warnings related to the wildfires and the associated smoke.
- Avoid prolonged outdoor activities. This is especially important for children and persons with pre-existing medical conditions
- Pay attention to visibility and how you feel.
- Stay indoors and run your air conditioner if you have one. Keep the fresh air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent bringing additional smoke inside. For best results, run the air conditioning with recirculated air. If you do not have an air conditioner, staying inside with the windows closed may be dangerous in extremely hot weather. In these cases, seek alternative shelter with family or friends.
- Help keep particle levels lower inside. When smoke levels are high, try to avoid using anything that burns, such as wood fireplaces, gas logs, gas stoves and candles. Do not vacuum, which stirs up particles already inside your home. Do not smoke.

Follow your doctor's advice about taking medicines and following your asthma management plan if you have asthma or another lung disease. Call your doctor if your symptoms worsen.

Persons should contact their doctor if they feel they have difficulty breathing due to the smoke. Persons with underlying medical conditions such as allergies, sinus problems, asthma and chronic lung diseases should contact their medical provider if they have concerns about their condition.

Wildfire activity is being monitored by the Florida Forest Service, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). A map of the wildfires and the latest Information on the status of Florida wildfires can be obtained at the Florida Fire Service website at <https://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Florida-Forest-Service>.

For more information, please contact your county health department or visit [www.floridahealth.gov](http://www.floridahealth.gov).

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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